

Penalty card

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A **penalty card** is used in many sports as a means of warning, reprimanding or penalising a player, coach or team official. Penalty cards are most commonly used by referees or umpires to indicate that a player has committed an offence. The referee will hold the card above his or her head while looking or pointing towards the player that has committed the offence. The colour and/or shape of the card used by the official indicates the type or seriousness of the offence and the level of punishment that is to be applied.



Yellow card shown in a handball match.

Contents

- 1 History and origin
- 2 Commonly used penalty cards
 - 2.1 Yellow card
 - 2.2 Red card
- 3 Other types of penalty cards
 - 3.1 Green card
 - 3.2 White card
 - 3.3 Blue card
 - 3.4 Black card
- 4 References

History and origin

The idea of using language-neutral coloured cards to communicate a referee's intentions originated with British football referee Ken Aston.^[1] Aston had been appointed to the FIFA Referees' Committee and was responsible for all referees at the 1966 FIFA World Cup. In the quarter finals, England met Argentina at Wembley Stadium. After the match, newspaper reports stated that referee Rudolf Kreitlein had cautioned both Bobby and Jack Charlton. The referee had not made his decision clear during the game, and England manager Alf Ramsey approached FIFA for post-match clarification. This incident started Aston thinking about ways to make a referee's decisions clearer to both players and spectators. Aston realised that a colour coding scheme based on the same principle as used on traffic lights (yellow - caution, red - stop) would traverse language barriers and clarify whether a player had been cautioned or expelled.^[1] As a result, yellow cards to indicate a caution and red cards to indicate an expulsion were used for the first time in the 1970 FIFA World Cup in Mexico. The use of penalty cards has since been adopted and expanded by several sporting codes, with each sport adapting the idea to its specific set of rules or laws.

Commonly used penalty cards

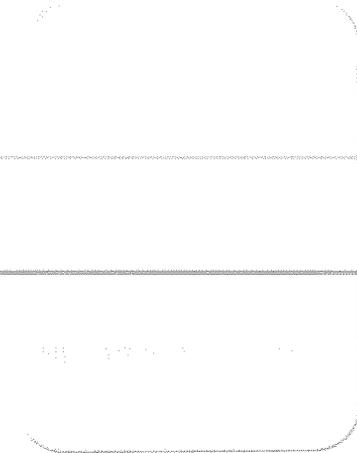
Yellow card

A **yellow card** is used in many different sporting codes. Its meaning differs among sports, however it most commonly indicates a caution given to a player regarding his or her conduct, or indicates a temporary suspension. Examples include:

- Association football (soccer): A yellow card is shown by the referee to indicate that a player has been officially cautioned.^[2] The player's details are then recorded by the referee in a small notebook; hence a caution is also known as a "booking". A player who has been cautioned may continue playing in the game, however a player who receives a second caution in a match is sent off (shown the yellow card again, and then a red card (see below)), meaning that he must leave the field immediately and take no further part in the game. The player may not be replaced by a substitute. Law 12 of the Laws of the Game (which are set by the International Football Association Board and used by FIFA) lists the types of offences and misconduct that may result in a caution.^[2] The seven reasons for a caution are:

1. Unsporting behaviour
2. Dissent by word or action
3. Persistently infringing the laws of the game
4. Delaying the restart of play
5. Failing to respect the required distance of a corner kick or free kick
6. Entering or re-entering the field of play without the referee's permission
7. Deliberately leaving the field of play without the referee's permission

- Bandy: A yellow card indicates a warning given to an entire team for technical fouls such as errors in the execution of goal-throws or free strokes, or the obstruction of a player without ball.^[3] Subsequent technical fouls by the same team result in a five minute penalty indicated by a white card.
- Canoe polo: A yellow card indicates a player has received two minute temporary suspension.^[4] A yellow card can be awarded for a deliberate and/or dangerous foul that prevents the scoring of a near certain goal, dangerous illegal play that is deliberate or repeated, foul or abusive language, continuously disputing a referee's decisions or receiving a third green card for any reason.
- Equestrian sports: Yellow cards may be issued during FEI sanctioned events for abuse of a horse or incorrect behavior towards an official.^[5] Abuse of the horse may include riding an obviously lame horse, riding an exhausted horse, excessive use of whip and/or spurs, and dangerous riding. Riders may choose to not accept issued cards, but doing so may lead to a disciplinary hearing. A rider receiving a yellow card can be disqualified from the event and subsequently fined or suspended.^[5]
- Fencing: A yellow card indicates a warning to a fencer and is valid for the remainder of the bout.^[6] In some cases, an annulment of any hit scored by the fencer at fault may also occur. Yellow cards are awarded for Group 1 offences such as making bodily contact with the opposing fencer



A yellow card is used in several sports. It most commonly indicates a warning or a temporary suspension.

(in foil or sabre), leaving the piste without permission, or refusing to obey the referee. A yellow card can also be awarded when, at the first call by the referee, a fencer does not present himself on the piste ready to fence. Any person not on the piste who disturbs the good order of the competition may also receive a yellow card on the first infringement.^[6]

- Field hockey: A yellow card indicates a temporary suspension. The length of the suspension is determined by the umpire, but in accordance with International Hockey Federation rules is a minimum of 5 minutes playing time.^[7] It is possible for a player to receive two yellow cards for different offences during the same match, however the period of suspension must be significantly longer with each yellow card. When an offence for which a yellow card has been awarded is repeated, the yellow card must not be used again and a more severe penalty must be awarded. There must also be a clear difference between the duration of a yellow card suspension for a minor offence and the duration for a major offence. The yellow card can be shown to a specific player or to the captain for misconduct by the entire team.^[7] In this case, the captain is temporarily suspended.
- Handball: A yellow card indicates a warning and can be given to a player or team official for unsportsmanlike conduct, or to a player whose actions are mainly or exclusively directed at the opponent and not at the ball. IHF rules also allow referees to use discretion to award a yellow card outside of these situations.^[8]
- Mixed Martial Arts promotions PRIDE(defunct), DEEP, and ZST: A warning, the third leads to disqualification.
- Racewalking: A yellow card indicates a competitor's foot fails to be on the ground when the rear leg is being raised, or the front leg is not straightened when it makes contact with the ground.^[9]
- Rugby league: Yellow cards are not usually used in rugby league in the southern hemisphere with referees indicating a 10 minute suspension by raising both arms straight out with fingers spread (to indicate 10 minutes).
- Rugby union: According to the laws of the game published by the International Rugby Board (IRB), during international matches, any player who commits an offence under Law 10 - Foul Play may be shown a yellow card and suspended from the game for 10 minutes.^[10] Offences include obstruction, unfair play, repeated infringements, dangerous play and misconduct which is prejudicial to the game. Receiving a yellow card is known colloquially as being sent to the "sin bin". A player receiving a second yellow card in a game will also be shown a red card (see below) meaning that he or she has been sent-off and will be unable to take part in the remainder of the match.
- Volleyball: A yellow card can be used in different ways to indicate several penalties. A player or team staff member can be shown a yellow card for the first instance of rude conduct and the referee may also penalise a team for delaying the game by pointing to the wrist using a yellow card.^[11] Both offences result in a loss of rally. A yellow card can also be used together with a red card to indicate a participant has been disqualified and can take no further part in the match.^[11] In the NCAA, red and yellow cards in the same hand indicate that the player must sit out the rest of that game, while red and yellow cards held apart indicate that the participant is disqualified and must leave the playing and spectator areas.

- Water polo: Given to entire bench as warning for disrespectful conduct from the coach, individual players, or the entire bench. Following the issuance of a yellow card, further incidents will result in a red card and the expulsion of individual players and coaches

Red card

A **red card** is used in several different sporting codes. Its meaning differs among sports, however it most commonly indicates a serious offence and often results in a player being permanently suspended from the game (also known as being "sent off" or "ejected" or "expelled" from the game, often to significant personal embarrassment). Examples include:

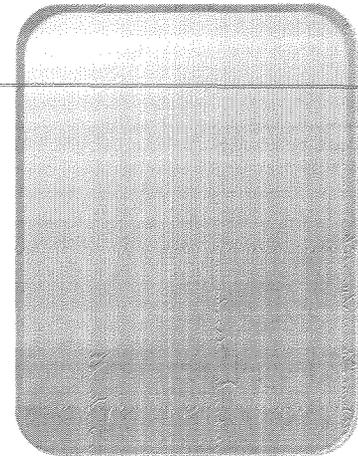
- Association football (soccer): A red card is shown by a referee to signify that a player has been sent off.^[2] A player who has been sent off is required to leave the field of play immediately and must take no further part in the game. The player who has been sent off cannot be replaced during the game; their team must continue the game with one player fewer. Law 12 of the Laws of the Game lists the categories of misconduct for which a player may be sent off. These are:

1. Serious foul play (a violent foul)
2. Violent conduct (any other act of violence)
3. Spitting at anyone
4. A deliberate handling offense to deny an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by any player other than a goalkeeper in his own penalty area
5. Committing an offence that denies an opponent an obvious goal-scoring opportunity (informally known as a professional foul)
6. Using offensive, insulting or abusive language or gestures
7. Receiving a second caution (yellow card) in one game

- Bandy: A red card indicates a player has been excluded for the remainder of the match and cannot be substituted.^[3] Red card offences include directly attacking an opponent or using abusive language. A coach or substitute may also be penalised with a red card. In this situation, a player currently on the rink also serves a ten minute penalty, resulting in the number of players being reduced by one.

- Canoe polo: A red card indicates a player has been sent off for the remainder of the match cannot be substituted.^[4] A red card can be awarded if a personal attack on a player occurs, repeated foul or abusive language, or when the award of a yellow card is disputed or has not had the desired effect of causing the player to control their play or attitude. A red card is also awarded when a player has received a second yellow card for any reason.

- Fencing: A red card is used to indicate that a fencer has committed an offence that warrants a penalty hit to be awarded to the opponent.^[6] Second and subsequent Group 1 offences, all Group 2 offences and first Group 3 offences are penalised with a red card.^[6] A red card may also be



A red card is used in several sports. It most commonly indicates a serious offence and can often mean that a player has been expelled from the game.



A red card shown in a handball match.

awarded when, at the second call by the referee, a fencer does not present himself on the piste ready to fence.

- **Field hockey:** A red card results in a player being permanently suspended from the game. The player cannot take any further part in the game and cannot be substituted. Unlike other penalty cards in field hockey, the red card is never given to the captain for team misconduct. In addition to their colour, red cards in field hockey are often circular in shape.^[7]
- **Handball:** A red card indicates a disqualification of a player who has committed an offence such as unsportsmanlike conduct, serious foul play or receiving a third two minute suspension.^[8] A red card prevents a player from playing in the remainder of the match and as a result reduces the number of players that are available to a team. A red card also carries a two minute suspension for the team, meaning that a team cannot replace the disqualified player until the two minute team suspension has expired.^[8]
- **Mixed martial arts promotion PRIDE:** A red card is issued as punishment and results in a 10% deduction of the guilty fighter's fight purse (only used when fights are conducted under PRIDE's Bushido rules).
- **Racewalking:** A red card indicates that a competitor's foot failed to be on the ground when the rear leg is being raised, or the front leg is not straightened when it makes contact with the ground. A judge would issue a yellow card for the first infraction committed by a competitor, and if the same judge detects a second infraction from the same infraction a red card is issued. Three red cards, from three different judges, will result in a competitor's disqualification.^[9]
- **Rugby union:** A red card is used to indicate that a player has been sent off and can take no further part in the game.^[10] During international matches, any player who commits an offence under Law 10 - Foul Play may be shown a red card. Red cards are normally issued for serious offences. Any player receiving a second yellow card in a game will automatically be shown a red card.
- **Volleyball:** A red card is used to indicate the expulsion of a player or team official and can be issued by the referee for the second instance of rude conduct or the first instance of offensive conduct.^[11] Expelled players must leave the playing area and remain in the penalty area for the remainder of the set. If an expelled player cannot be legally substituted, their team loses the set.^[11] A red card shown together with a yellow card indicates a participant has been disqualified and can take no further part in the match.^[11] In the NCAA, red and yellow cards in the same hand indicate that the player must sit out the rest of that game, while red and yellow cards held apart indicate that the participant is disqualified and must leave the playing and spectator areas.
- **Water polo:** A red card is issued to a coach and/or player(s) on the bench for a second incident of misconduct after receiving a yellow card, or immediately in cases of severe misconduct (i.e. verbal abuse of referee or desk official).

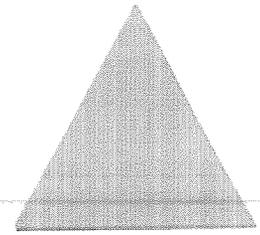
Other types of penalty cards

Green card

A **green card** is used in some sports to indicate an official warning to a player

who has committed a minor offence that does not warrant a more serious sanction.

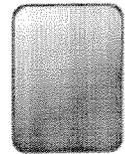
- Canoe polo: A green card indicates an official warning that can be applied to an individual player or a whole team.^[4] A green card can be awarded for deliberate unsporting behavior or unnecessary verbal communication to the referee.
- Field hockey: A green card indicates an official warning when a minor offence has occurred. A second green card for the same player will result in a yellow card (5 minute suspension). In this case, the referee will show a green card, followed by a yellow card. When an offence for which a green card has been awarded is repeated, a yellow card should be awarded. A green card can be given to a specific player or to the captain as a warning to the entire team. Cards shown to the captain as a warning to the team are treated separate from cards shown to the captain as a player. In addition to their colour, green cards in field hockey are often triangular in shape.^[7]



In field hockey, a triangular-shaped green card indicates an official warning.

White card

A **white card** is used in bandy to indicate a five minute timed penalty given to a player.^[3] The offending player must leave the playing area and wait on a penalty bench near the centre line until the penalty has expired. During the 5 minute period the player may not be replaced, although he or she may be replaced with a different player when the penalty has expired. Offences that can warrant a white card include trying to hinder the opponents from executing a free-stroke, illegal substitution or repeated illegal but non-violent attacks on an opponent.



In bandy, a white card indicates a five minute penalty while a blue card indicates a ten minute penalty.

Blue card

A **blue card** is used in bandy to indicate a ten minute timed penalty given to a player.^[3] The offending player must leave the playing area and wait on a penalty bench near the centre line until the penalty has expired. During the 10 minute period the player may not be replaced, although he or she may be replaced with a different player when the penalty has expired. A blue card is typically shown for offences that are more serious than those warranting a white card including attacking an opponent in a violent or dangerous way, causing advantage by intentionally stopping the ball with a high stick or protesting a referee's decision.

Black card



A **black card** is used in fencing and is issued by the director for severe rule infractions.^[6] A second instance of a Group 3 offence, and all Group 4 offences including deliberate brutality, refusal to fence or refusal to salute can be punished with a black card.^[6] When the black card is issued, the offending fencer is excluded from the remainder of the competition and may be suspended from further tournaments. In the official record of the tournament, his or her name is replaced with the words "**FENCER EXCLUDED**".^[12]

References

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11. [^] ^{*a*} ^{*b*} ^{*c*} ^{*d*} ^{*e*} "FIVB - Official Volleyball Rules 2005". fivb.org. <http://www.fivb.org/TheGame/Rules.htm/>. Retrieved June 16 2008.
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The Race Card -- President Obama Forced to Use His Black Card

September 21, 2009 by Miko Lee



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Just as the title of this article suggests that President Obama "Quit Playing the Race Card," I am hoping that the author and those who agree with her would "Quit Playing the Ignorance Card." Our president has been identified as the first black president, but I'm not sure that I've ever heard him use the term "first black president." Our society and media felt compelled to label him this way. But as a person of color, let me assure you that he was labeled a black person long before his run for presidency.

Let me introduce you to the "One Drop Rule." This common belief was that anyone with a hint of African ancestry would be classified as black. This means that even someone like Mariah Carey, who appears white, would be classified black. Although those beliefs no longer exist on paper, they still exist in people's minds. Especially when someone appears black on the outside.

Furthermore, it's hard to see the "glamour" that you mention as a "benefit" of being black and rising to the top. Being black means being treated like a second-class citizen your entire life. Back in the day, this meant being treated inhumanely, with animals having more rights than a person of color. If there is any glamour in his "rise," please place that responsibility with the media, and not with the person being labeled. This is more of a success story, and not nearly as glamorous as you try to make it seem.

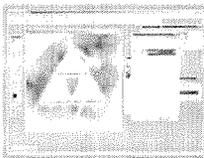
Sure, it's a possibility that your forefathers were indentured servants. The obvious difference is that indentured servitude was by choice, while slavery was not. Another difference is the fact that people don't really care about your background if you are white—not as much as if you are black, or at least appear to be black. This is obvious when you consider that someone like Sarah Palin was unnervingly close to becoming our vice president. I am sure that if Sarah were black, she would have been crucified for her lack of knowledge, lack of experience and overall shallowness. So please don't tell me that there is anything glamorous and easy about being black and running for office.

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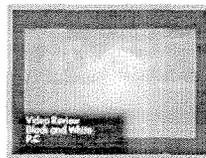
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By Lisa W...



Photoshop Tutorial: Black and Wh...

By Nicole Owey



Black and White PC Vide...

By John Gibson

Boston Globe Op Ed Might Lay Out Attack Plan for Republicans Against Obama with Race Card in Play



A recent Op Ed piece in the Boston Globe points out a weakness in the campaign of Senator Barack Obama that could define a path for Republicans to utilize the race card to corner Barack Obama in a position that could put the White House out of Reach.

By Brett Kaufman | Published 04/2/07

Quit Playing the Race Card



His father was black, but his mother and maternal grandparents that raised him were Caucasian and he could just as easily have chosen to covet that portion of his ethnicity. Why didn't he? I submit that it's because there is no benefit in doing so

By Mark Green St. Louis | Published 7/7/07

[Indentured Servitude and Early Colonial America](#)

However, the colonies also experienced heavy immigration (approximately 75%) from indentured servants who signed contracts agreeing to serve their "sponsors," in exchange for passage to the colonies, among other things.



What role did the Chesapeake colonies play in supporting England in the 1600's? How did the link between England and her colonies preclude the American Revolution?

If that's not what you were looking for, please check out the results below, or search again.

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How did those who sought passage across the Atlantic as indentured servants eventually end up as slaves? What prompted plantation owners to seek a new labor source?

Learn More with This Easy Card Trick!

Rush Card - Review

The Real Salem Witch Trials

People think cries of "Witch" and rampant bonfires were the marks of Salem in 1692 during America's only witch craze. The truth is, they were all hung and only 20 people died (compared to hundreds of thousands or more in Europe).

By William K. Miller - Published 8/31/2008

African Americans and the One-Drop Rule



Throughout American history, African-Americans and other minorities have faced pervasive prejudice and discrimination. The one-drop rule serves as an example of this. This rule suggested that any person with one drop of non-white ancestry was considered to be colored.

By ... - Published ...

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Definitions

black card

noun

1. (*fencing*) The most severe of penalties, which results in the fencer being expelled from the match




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playing cards

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Who invented the Playing
Cards? Who did the artist
Why? ...

What's the story behind a
deck of playing cards?

How many
black,king,heart,red cards
are there in it.

Do you or you know where to
find cheap personalized ...

What is the game cribbage?
How is it played? Does...

Can anyone tell me what suit
were the 3 playing ca...

Why would a religious family
be against playing ca...

What are some of the surfiest
... ..

how many card games are
possible with a deck of
52

How computers guess
correctly playing cards
without...

Whats the difference
between "bicycle" playng
car...

"Each King in a Deck of
Playing Cards
represents ...

Which shop(s) can I buy
Bicycle playing cards
from...

What's the official order of a
deck of 52 playing

... ..
the price of each suit ...

How many black,king,heart,red
cards. What is the
probe ...

Where can I find and online

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TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2009

How many black,king,heart,red cards are there in the pack of 52 playing cards?

number of black cards- 26, # of kings-4,# of red cards-26, # of hearts-13

How many black,king,heart,red cards are there in the pack of 52 playing cards?

There are Thirteen cards in each suit.





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Home > Red suit

The red suits are hearts and diamonds, because most Anglo-American playing cards print these suit symbols in red.

There is nothing special at the basic level such as a combination of contract bridge, but it is often convenient to be able to talk about suit combinations in the context of the game. Suits in bridge give special functions to black cards or red cards.

See also

- [red suit](#)
- [red suit](#)



Anglo-American playing card games Bridge



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Suit cards

Suit cards: Encyclopedia - Suit cards

In playing cards, a suit is one of several categories into which the cards of a deck are divided. Each card has a rank and bears one of several symbols showing to which suit it belongs; the suit may alternatively or in addition be indicated by the color printed on the card. Most card decks also have a rank for each card, and may include special cards in the deck that belong to no suit. Suit cards - Traditional Western playing cards. Although many different types of deck have been known and used in Europ ...

Including:

- Suit cards - Traditional Western playing cards
- Suit cards - Suits in games with traditional decks
 - Suit cards - Trumps
 - Suit cards - Special suits
 - Suit cards - Ordering suits
 - Suit cards - Ignoring suits
 - Suit cards - Suits and colors
- Suit cards - Adding extra suits to the Anglo-American deck
 - Suit cards - Commercial decks
 - Suit cards - Home-made decks
- Suit cards - Other modern suited decks
 - Suit cards - Suit-and-value decks
 - Suit cards - Other suited decks
 - Suit cards - Fictional decks

Suit cards, Suit cards - Adding extra suits to the Anglo-American deck, Suit cards - Commercial decks, Suit cards - Fictional decks, Suit cards - Home-made decks, Suit cards - Ignoring suits, Suit cards - Ordering suits, Suit cards - Other modern suited decks, Suit cards - Other suited decks, Suit cards - Special suits, Suit cards - Suit-and-value decks, Suit cards - Suits and colors, Suit cards - Suits in games with traditional decks, Suit cards - Traditional Western playing cards, Suit cards - Trumps

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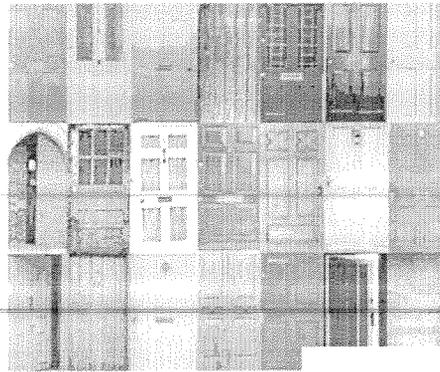
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Suit cards: Encyclopedia - Suit cards

Suit (cards)

In playing cards, a **suit** is one of several categories into which the cards of a deck are divided. Most often, each card bears one of several symbols showing to which suit it belongs; the suit may alternatively or in addition be indicated by the color printed on the card. Most card decks also have a *rank* for each card, and may include special cards in the deck that belong to no suit.

Suit cards - Traditional Western playing cards

Although many different types of deck have been known and used in Europe since the introduction of playing cards around the 14th century (see playing cards)—and several different ones are still used in various regions for various games—almost all of them have in common that:

- there are exactly four suits (possibly with the addition of some non-suited cards, see below);
- the cards within each suit are distinguished from one another by bearing different numbers or names, known as *ranks*;
- the ranks serve the explicit purpose of indicating which cards within a suit are "better", "higher" or "more valuable" than others, whereas there is no order between the different suits; and
- there is exactly one card of any given rank in any given suits.

The differences between European decks are mostly in the number of cards in each suit (for example, thirteen in the commonly-known Anglo-American deck, fourteen in the French Tarot, eight in most games in Germany and Austria, five in Hungarian Illustrated Tarock) and in the inclusion or exclusion of an extra series of (usually) twenty-one numbered cards known as tarocks or Major Arcana, sometimes considered as a fifth suit, but more properly regarded as a group of special suitless cards, to form what is known as a Tarot deck.

The Spanish-style suits are the original suits, the suits found on the divinatory Tarot deck, and the suits found in the oldest surviving European decks. The French style suits became popular after they were introduced, largely because cards using those suits were less expensive to manufacture; the traditional suits required a woodcut for each card, while with the French suits the "pip" cards—the cards containing only a certain number of the suit objects—could be made by stencils, and only the "court" cards, the cards with human figures, required woodcuts.

The following table shows the original equivalence between various names and designs used for the suits in traditional decks in different parts of Europe. It does not show every country individually (for example, France and Denmark have 78-card Tarot decks, but they use the familiar hearts, diamonds, spades and clubs), although Anglo-American decks are known in every country, and would be used for imported games such as bridge.

Suit cards - Suits in games with traditional decks

A huge number of card games have been invented for the Anglo-American deck, and as such the general statement that "suits are usually equal" now has countless exceptions.

Suit cards - Trumps

In a large and popular category of trick-taking games, traditionally called whist-style games although the best-known example may now be bridge, one suit is designated in each hand of play to be **trump** and all cards of the trump suit rank above all non-trump cards, and automatically prevail over them, losing only to a higher trump if one is played to the same trick. In most such games, trump cards cannot be played if the player can follow suit to the card led to the trick; in a few, trumps can be played at any time. The result of this is that trump cards are more likely to win tricks than cards of a non-trump suit of the same value. The "Major Arcana" of the Tarot cards are used as a

permanent suit of trumps in the game of tarocchi or tarock.

It is unclear whether the word "trump" derives from "triumph", documented as the name of a card game in 1529, or from "trump", meaning to deceive or cheat, from the French *tromper*.

More information on playing "black cards"

Suit cards - Special suits

Some games treat one or more suits as being special or different from the others. A simple example is Spades, which uses spades as a permanent trump suit. A less simple example is Hearts, which is a kind of point trick game in which the object is to avoid taking tricks containing hearts. With typical rules for Hearts (rules vary slightly), the queen of spades and the two of clubs (sometimes also the jack of diamonds) have special effects, with the result that all four suits have different strategic value.

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Suit cards - Ordering suits

Whist-style rules generally prevent the necessity of determining which of two cards are different suits has higher value, because a card played on a card of a different suit either automatically wins or automatically loses depending on whether the new card is a trump. However, some card games also need to make a definition of which suit is intrinsically the most valuable. An example of this is in auction games such as bridge, where if one player bids to make some number of heart tricks and another bids to make the same number of diamond tricks, there must be a mechanism to determine which takes precedence.

As there is no truly standard way to order the four suits, each game that needs to do so has its own convention; however, the ubiquity of bridge has gone some way to make its ordering a *de facto* standard. Typical orderings of suits include (from highest to lowest):

- Bridge: spades, hearts, diamonds, clubs (*for bidding and scoring*);
- Five Hundred: hearts, diamonds, clubs, spades (*for bidding and scoring*);
- Ninety-nine: clubs, hearts, spades, diamonds (*supposedly mnemonic as they have respectively 3, 2, 1, 0 lobes; see article for how this scoring is used*);
- Skat: clubs, spades, hearts, diamonds (*for bidding and scoring and to determine which Jack beats which in play*).

Spades, Hearts, Clubs, Diamonds

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Suit cards - Ignoring suits

In some games, such as blackjack, suits are completely meaningless and are ignored. In a few games, especially solitaire games such as the Klondike game popularized by Windows 3.1, only the *color* (red or black) is important—thus, hearts and diamonds are equivalent to each other, but not to spades or clubs. This, at least notionally, creates problems with four-color decks (see below).

Bridge players constructing complex signaling systems have found it useful to give names to every possible pair of suits (so that they can agree that a particular bid means, for example, that they hold "five of a red suit".) There are three ways to divide four suits into pairs, and they are known as *red* (hearts and diamonds) versus *black*, *major* (spades and hearts, a reference to the suit order as above) versus *minor*, and *pointy* (diamonds and spades, which visually have a sharp point uppermost) versus *round*. In the event of widespread introduction of four-color decks, it has been suggested that the red/black distinction could be replaced by *pointy bottoms* (hearts and diamonds visually have a sharp point downwards, whereas spades and clubs have a blunt stem).

Suit cards - Suits and colors

It has frequently been observed that printing the four different suits in four different colors would be visually less confusing than the traditional system of using just two (which in any case probably arose from a printing economy no longer necessary—see Playing cards). Indeed, most European languages simply call the suit of a card its "colour". Four-color decks are in use in specific games (such as Barry's & Les's) or in places where visibility may not be ideal (or on a computer screen). In these, most commonly diamonds are blue cards, hearts are red cards, spades are black cards and clubs are green cards—see main article.

Suit cards - Adding extra suits to the Anglo-American deck

Various people have independently suggested expanding the Anglo-American deck to five, six or even more suits, and have proposed rules for expanded versions of popular games such as rummy, hearts, bridge, and poker that could be played with such a deck (see external links)

Suit cards - Commercial decks

Commercially available five-suit (65-card) decks include Stardeck, which introduces "stars" as a fifth suit, and Cinco Loco, which introduces "5's". (In both decks the fifth suit is colored a mixture of black and red.) Commercially available six-suit (78-card) decks include the Empire Deck (which has three red suits and three black suits) and Sextet (which has two red suits, two black suits, and two blue suits).

Suit cards - Home-made decks

If extra-suited decks are not readily available or are too expensive, an easier way to create a deck with up to eight suits is to buy two identical decks and modify the suit symbols throughout one of them with a marker. R. Wayne Schmittberger in *New Rules for Classic Games* originated the idea of drawing an arrow through each heart to

create "valentines" and a cross through each diamond to create "kites". Erick Flaig suggests that clubs could have their stem rounded to create "cloverleaves" and spades could have horns and tail added to become "devils".

Suit cards - Other modern suited decks

Suit cards - Suit-and-value decks

A large number of games are based around a deck in which each card has a value and a suit (usually represented by a color), and for each suit there is exactly one card having each value, though in many cases the deck has various special cards as well. Examples include Tichu, Mu und Mehr, Lost Cities, Sticheln, Rage, Schotten Totten, Wizard and ROOK.

Suit cards - Other suited decks

Decks for some games are divided into suits, but otherwise bear little relation to traditional games. An example would be the game Taj Mahal, in which each card has one of four background colors, the rule being that all the cards played by a single player in a single round must be the same color. The selection of cards in the deck of each color is approximately the same and the player's choice of which color to use is guided by the contents of their particular hand.

In the trick-taking card game *Flaschenteufel* (*The Bottle Imp*) players must follow the suit led, but if they are void in that suit they may play a card of another suit *which can still win the trick if its value is high enough*. For this reason every card in the deck has a different number to prevent ties. A further strategic element is introduced since one suit contains mostly low cards and another, mostly high cards.

A special mention should be made of the card game Set. Whereas cards in a traditional deck have two classifications—suit and rank—and each combination is represented by one card, giving for example *4 suits × 13 ranks = 52 cards*, each card in a Set deck has four classifications each into one of three categories, giving a total of *3 × 3 × 3 × 3 = 81 cards*. Any one of these four classifications could be considered a "suit", but this is not really enlightening in terms of the structure of the game.

Suit cards - Fictional decks

Several people have invented decks which are not meant to be seriously played. The Double Fanucci deck from *Zork* takes the most imaginative licence with the suits: it has no fewer than fifteen, with the names Mazes, Books, Rain, Bugs, Fromps, Inkblots, Scythes, Plungers, Faces, Time, Lamps, Hives, Ears, Zurfs, and Tops. The Cripple Mr. Onion deck uses eight suits, combining the standard Anglo-American ones with the traditional/Tarot/Spanish ones. The Discordian deck is a parody of the Tarot deck, its five suits corresponding to the five Discordian elements.

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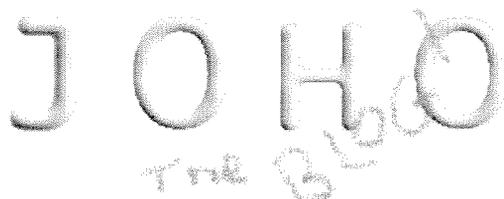
Major Arcana, Bridge, Cripple Mr. Onion, Discordian, Double Fanucci, Five Hundred, Four-color decks, French Tarot, Hearts, Klondike, Lost Cities, Major Arcana, Ninety-nine, Playing cards, ROOK, Rage, Set, Skat, Spades, Tarock, Tarot, The Bottle Imp, Tichu, Windows 3.1, Wizard, Zork, blackjack, bridge, hearts, main article, parody, playing cards, poker, rummy, stencils, tarocchi, tarock, tarocks, trick-taking games, triumph, whist, woodcut



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The politics of playing cards

Posted on April 16th, 2008

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Thanks to my relentless ego-surfing, um, I mean my participating in the ongoing conversation that is the Web, I came across a rough draft of a course paper by Devin Dadigan about the racism and sexism implicit in playing cards, — which, apparently are ordered the way they have been since the 14th century. Kings beat queens, and, the black queen is an especially disastrous card in several games.

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At first I thought Devin's hypothesis about race was problematic, because I thought clubs are sometimes taken as the highest suit, even though Devin says that black cards represent labor and slaves. (That link seems incontestable in America where "spade" has been a demeaning — and occasionally hip — term for African-Americans.) [Wikipedia](#), however, says that when suits are ranked, clubs sometimes come first because the ranking is done alphabetically. Ah, the hidden power of alphabetization! Why, it even cures racism!

Fascinating fact: According to the paper, the ascent of the ace as the highest card "was hastened in the late 18th century by the French Revolution, where games began being played 'ace high' as a symbol of lower classes rising in power above the royalty."

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7 Responses to "The politics of playing cards"

1. [Betsy Devine](#), on [April 16th, 2008 at 11:33 am](#) Said:

Suit ranking depends on the game you happen to be playing (see <http://www.cs.man.ac.uk/~daf/i...anking.php>):

hearts, diamonds, clubs, spades: Preference, 500, Tysiacha
 clubs, spades, hearts, diamonds: Skat, Doppelkopf, Sheepshead
 spades, hearts, clubs, diamonds: Big Two (Choi Dai Di, Da Lao Er)
 diamonds, hearts, spades, clubs: Pusoy Dos
 clubs, hearts, spades, diamonds: Ninety-nine
 spades, hearts, diamonds, clubs: Contract Bridge

2. [Betsy Devine](#), on [April 17th, 2008 at 2:51 am](#) Said:

The author's thesis "Two things that have not changed however are the racist and sexist undertones of cards that were developed at the time cards were fashioned." I am sure this claim will be greeted with cries of delight by its intended audience, but the author proves nothing of the kind, devoting himself instead to scattered arguments in the form "cum hoc ergo propter hoc." Racism and sexism exist, they are VERY BAD THINGS, but there are better ways to confront them than with confused term papers.

3. [davidw](#), on [April 17th, 2008 at 7:56 am](#) Said:

Betsy, I'm not seeing that fallacy here. Doesn't the fact that queens are ranked lower than kings indicate a cultural sexism? What am I missing?

As for the racism of the suits, I do think that that's a weaker argument, with mixed evidence, although I don't see the cum hoc etc. fallacy there either.

4. [Spiral](#), on [April 23rd, 2008 at 12:55 pm](#) Said:

I think arguing that cards are racist is totally ridiculous. There's black cards, sure, but red cards? What? Where's the white cards that trump all the other suits? ;)

The fact that queens are ranked lower than kings could be taken as sexist, or historical. Historically speaking, kings rule countries and queens only ruled if there were no kings available, for the most part. This is a fact that isn't really in contention, so.... why wouldn't a king have greater value than a queen? There aren't really any powerful kings or queens in the world anymore. If cards were intended to be modern, why isn't there a President card, or maybe a CEO card? They aren't intended to be modern.

So I say, the fact that a king beats a queen is about as sexist as saying, there used to be slaves in America, is racist. There's no bias, it's just how things happened. It's historical fact. Denying the past isn't going to resolve racism or sexism.

5. [Betsy Devine, on April 25th, 2008 at 4:26 am](#) Said:

David, you say you don't see fallacious reasoning here. Here's one example, in my opinion.

To quote the paper: "I believe that as more playing card games were invented, a hierarchy began to evolve where black cards were of lower value than red cards. Ultimately, I think this hierarchy directly translates back to French society and the issue of slavery which was going on at that time."

Presumably, by "that time" he means approximately 1480 when French playing cards introduced the four suits used on modern cards — spades, clubs, diamonds, and hearts. I am unaware of a single historical source that proposes slavery or white-versus-black racism as major "issues" shaping French thought in the fifteenth century. Spades and clubs were derived from the German suits called leaf and acorn.

Furthermore, the author may "believe" that black cards are of lower value than red ones — but this belief is mistaken. The suits are equivalent in most modern games. In Bridge, spades are the highest-ranking suit, although bidding can establish any of the four suits as "trump" suit during a hand, outranking all others. In Casino, the two of spades is the "little casino" worth one extra point to whoever holds it.

The evidence cited for black cards having less value (Old Maid, superstitious poker players, slang usage of "spade" as a racial term) are similarly cherry-picked modern examples that no more prove the low-ranking of black suits than the existence of my Technorati Tshirt and yours proves that such Tshirts are high fashion for Boston geeks.

This is just one example of where the author asserts two questionable "facts" (A = "The original assignment of playing card suits was based on racism" B = "In modern card games, black playing cards are worth less than red ones") with the causative connection that A -> B. He offers some spotty evidence for A and B, but do you see evidence here for causation?

6. [www super casino, on June 4th, 2008 at 11:10 am](#) Said:

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Seaqueen Citizen

 **Pages of Shustah cards**

July 10th, 08 08:11 AM
Location: Canada
Posts: 118

Of all the decks in my collection of cards I find the Pages of Shustah(c) quite intriguing. This divination & meditation deck was created around 1974.

The deck consists of 70 cards grouped into 5 different colors - red, green, yellow, blue and black. Each suits contains 14 cards. The accompanying book was written by Ann Manser and Cecil North. The sketches on the cards were done by Ann Manser, mostly in pen & ink. The images induce movements within the cards that provide a great venue for psychic awareness of the cards.

The descriptions in the book are brief but there is enough information provided to give you a good foundation. Each card is described on 7 levels of comprehension.

The RED cards depict challenges, obstacles etc much like the Swords of the Tarot.
 The GREEN cards depict growth, advancement, progress etc. I would equate them to the Pentacles of the Tarot.
 The YELLOW cards depict creativity, spiritual awareness, blessings and remind me of the "ideas" of the Wands of Tarot.
 The BLUE cards depict serenity, gentleness, compassion etc. Similar to the Cups of Tarot.

 The BLACK cards represent the 12 signs of the Zodiac with 2 cards (Latching the Self (significator) and Destiny (fate), respectively).

The book details a few layouts, such as an Astrological wheel layout, specific question layout and the 3 card draw.

Card 1 will represent the "root" of the question
 Card 2 will represent the "situation" or "problem"
 Card 3 will represent the "result" or "outcome"

The book states that there is a relationship between all three cards and depending on the scene in the cards selected, it will either hinder or enhance the totality of the meaning.

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Lord of the Rings Tarot

US Games Systems, Inc

Designed by Mike Fitzgerald

Reviewed by Mike Siggins

c£12

2 to 6

about 30 mins

It does at times seem as if the last eighteen months have been full of Mr Tolkien and his works. Much exposure to Middle Earth: The Wizards, expectation of Lidless Eye, a re-reading of the books and now a Lord of the Rings tarot deck from US Games Systems. The first point to make is that this is not collectible, nor is it a particularly new game. The second aspect to tackle is the Tarot connection. I am no expert, but to me this looks like a full blown Tarot deck with all the vague mystical connotations that engenders - from harmless fairground readers and cartomancy, through numerous dodgy media images, to all sorts of weird stuff that I don't wish to talk about. A couple of opponents have looked askance when I have pulled the cards from the box, and with titles like Death and The Hanging Man I can understand their reaction. But since I will have nothing to do with the occult (it scares the tar out of me), I was able to reassure them. Once the game is underway, as we shall see, there is minimal connection with the darker facets of Tarot. And of course all over the world, Tarot decks (and variations thereon) have long been, and still are, used for traditional card games. So with this mix, even if Tarot cards are impossible to shuffle, US Games Systems (who have a huge range of tarot packs) are covering both bases.

A Tarot deck has 78 cards, divided into 22 numbered (0-21) major arcana (the famous images of the Fool, Death, Hierophant, Judgment and so on) and the minor arcana, 56 cards in four long suits - cups, wands, swords and coins. Mike Fitzgerald has taken this core material and used it to depict the journey of the ringbearers to Mount Doom, while always under the watchful eye of Sauron. A loose theme, it must be said, but I have seen more tenuous links. The game system is based on Crazy Eights or Twizzle (a family of card games made famous by Uno), and the designer has cleverly carried this off with only a couple of graphical additions to the Tarot deck - each card is designated as light, dark or neutral, the latter being dark or light as declared.

The game is played over three hands, and each hand starts with the One Ring being placed in the middle of the table. Each player is dealt eight cards and we are quickly underway. In his turn, a player may either play a major arcana card 'to the ring' which, as long as it is higher than any previous card (shades of Flaschenteufel here) or the Fool (Gollum - value 0 which resets the rubicon) which beats anything, makes him the ringbearer. Alternatively, a card may be played to the 'journey deck' - following either suit or number of the preceding card, or laying a major arcana and declaring a new suit. As an alternative (usually exercised when you can't play a card) you can pick up a card from the draw pile and then play option one or two, or pass. The key to the game (and I could hear you wondering) is in the alignment of the cards. If you play a light side card there is no problem. If you play a dark card to the Ring, you take three dark points (beads, pennies or poker chips are fine), if you play one to the journey deck, you take two, and any dark cards left in your hand at the end of the hand are worth one each. Neutrals can be played as dark or light, as described, depending on your tactical situation. Finally, and importantly, the ringbearer has the powerful option of re-allocating one dark point per turn - to or from himself, or between other players. Holding the ring (rightly) thus gives a lot of power, albeit with little downside. The ringbearer will often have the say in where the dark points end up, so it is a much coveted role.

Victory is determined in a rather neat mechanic, that means the ring is always important and that each of the three hands is important in two different ways. Five victory points are awarded for the following achievements: going

out first; the bearer of the One Ring; the player with most dark points; the player with least dark points. Bonus points are on offer if the ring is held by the dark or light sides. These points are logged on the scoresheet, as well as the cumulative dark points earned. At the end of the game, the player with the most dark points gains an extra five victory points, and the same applies for the best Free People performance. So as you can see, there are several ways to score points both tactically within a hand, and with a strategic eye on the running totals.

One of the oddest omissions is that there doesn't seem to be a rule for splitting ties. Not usually a problem in many games I grant you, but because of the broad brush victory point allocation we have had four tied games in ten outings so far. I think those that 'won' the draw were aware of the fact, but we really need some sort of ruling here. Admittedly, we have played mainly with three, which will mean at least two of the players will score each round, and this may be giving rise to the ties. It is safe then to conclude that the game is best with four to six players. That said, the scoring system is quite clever and is the source of the tactics and decision making present in the game.

In play, thanks to the mix of cards, one is usually dealt primarily light side cards. There are fewer dark cards, and even fewer neutrals. The tactics boil down not only to getting rid of cards, though this is often an important factor, but aligning yourself with the goodies or the baddies. Because of the card split it is inherently 'easier' to tend to the light side (it is also where you start), but those black cards are always lurking. You may get them dealt to you, or you may pick them up before you can clear your hand. Once acquired, they must either be kept in hand (keeping your position secret, but ultimately gaining dark points at the end of play) or you can go overt and try to gain enough dark points for victory - a much easier task if you are also the ringbearer. Another tactical ploy is to pick up more cards in the hope of improving your dark points but there is a game end limit of eight cards which should not be breached.

In round one, you tend to go with the flow and if you end up at either end of the dark/light spectrum you have a good basis. The passing on of cards in the second and third hands helps matters, and allows you to concentrate on your destiny. To a point. If we are talking control, then you have far less than in say Bridge or Hearts. However good your card play, you will get the odd stray point that you don't want, and the ringbearer is forever moving points around to his own ends (and seldom yours, though he may not know your aims). Balancing this is the good luck that will enable you to play an entire round with great cards, scoring either zero or a handful of dark points. In one hand I scored over twenty, and it is this ability to turn around a position that keeps the game interesting - even a committed light side player can change suddenly and decisively to his advantage. I am of the opinion though that this is sometimes more through luck than judgment.

One of the biggest selling, and sticking, points of this set will be the artwork by Peter Pracownik who, like the designer Mike Fitzgerald, became known to the gaming hobby through the Wyvern CCG. I can only describe his style as idiosyncratic, but it does have a certain appeal. Each picture has been specially created for the deck, and every one is different, with a distinct high Middle Ages feel. Some of the interpretations of Tolkien's characters are, umm, debatable - if I described Eowyn as wearing a décolleté Miss World evening dress, split to the upper thigh, Gandalf looking like Merlin from Boorman's Excalibur and Bombadil resembling a garden gnome, you will probably get the general idea. As with ME:TW, all this is subjective and hardly of moment since the effect is generally pleasing. What is far more important is how well designed these cards are for play. And the answer is they aren't. The suits and numbers are barely apparent from the images, so you need to look at the left hand sidebars which are far from clear and, by spreading the cards, the top right symbol to see if it is light, dark or neutral. So dock some marks for utility.

It is difficult to come to any exciting conclusions about LOTR Tarot. If you want to buy it for the cards alone, then it will come down to looking them over and parting with the cash if you like the production values. And if you are a real collector, you will want to get hold of one of the 500 limited edition sets which comes with gold edging in a posh box - very smart indeed. Of course, you can always buy Dummett's excellent Twelve Tarot Games book and play some of those. As a game, it has a lot in common with Wizard - a traditional card mechanic has been adopted and tweaked, with hopes of beneficial results. I would say LOTR is easily a better game than Uno or Crazy Eights, since there is an element of thought beyond simply getting rid of your cards. Offsetting this is a feeling, and perhaps evidence, that however well you play your three hands, with any degree of bad luck you will have a hard time to remain in contention. I have seen good card players score zero dark

points in round one, then fifteen, then zero without much say in the matter. So, ultimately, this is another nice little card game from US Games Systems. Not earth-shattering, but fun. Like Wizard it works well enough, and its primary attribute is that is easy to learn and to get others playing quickly. It is also short enough to become a regular filler. It is however, despite the inventor's assertions, unlikely to offer a long term challenge to hardened hobbyists or card game players.

[Ken: I wish that USGS had formatted the card information such that the deck could be used to play the various tarot games common in Europe. Instead, we have the traditional useless New Age divination layout. And from a game company!]

The Game Cabinet - editor@gamecabinet.com - Mike Siggins



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you need an answer to a question or insight into a situation, you do not need to know the tarot -- there is an option and anyone can use it! All you will need is a (preferably) new deck of regular playing cards and some basic information, which is coming up!

The process is quick and easy. Sit comfortably with both feet flat on the floor (this 'grounds' you), close your eyes and hold the deck in your hands. If you are feeling stressed, take a deep breath: in through your nose and out (slowly) through your mouth -- relax and focus on what you are doing, which is opening a 'line of communication' between yourself and your oracle.

Visualize the situation or problem and ask a single and direct question that can be answered by 'yes' or 'no' (the purpose of which is to provide the strongest 'director' energy) -- again, simplicity is the key -- try not to 'layer' your query. Drawing one card at a time will provide much clearer results.

Focus your thought on the question, shuffle gently and when you feel your concentration is at its highest peak, cut the cards (just allow the deck to fall open in your hands, then lift one section up and place it behind the other section). It sounds more complicated than it is: you are simply cutting the deck in your hands as opposed to on the table (once the deck is placed down, the energy flow and connection is 'broken').

Cut the deck three times, then flip the top card. If you have an 'intuitive flash' when you see the card, this is part of the message. Then look at the colour, suit and number or face card and link their meanings as described below (and you may turn two more cards from the top of the deck for further clarity, or to read the past, present and future energies of the situation in question).

The Colours

* Black cards indicate an uneven energy and suggest caution...the worst case scenario would be a 'no'.



* Red cards indicate a responsive or generally supportive energy...the best case scenario would be a 'yes'.

The Suits

* Spades refer to thoughts, communications and decisions -- and can also refer to authoritative, controlling or even abusive energies. Facing difficult experiences, such as health issues or shifts in relationships fall under the influence of the spade.

* Clubs are connected to the fire and passion of the physical body, its actions, fertility, growth and the social arena. Here is where intense interests and desires reside along with the focus and drive to realize them.

* Diamonds refer to logic, practicality, ambition, money, security and relate to education, careers, homes and personal motivation with an eye to personal success. A diamond may appear if money, the home or a job is the focus of the enquiry.

* Hearts point to the emotions: being in love, strong friendships, family unity and nurturing of the self. This is a warm, flowing and loving energy -- but it can also carry the heartbreak and pain of separations, depression and loss.

The Numbers

* The Ace (number 1) is an original force, a new start, a breakthrough and the will to survive. This card will show up when something new is underway, as in a relationship, domestic move or job. This energy requires that the past be left behind so that the future may be fully embraced.

* Number 2 is the couple, the two sides, the duality and the balance (or imbalance) between them. This number will show up when there is a situation involving 2 people, places or things and refers to the state of balance between the consultant and another element.

* Number 3 is the (magical) trinity, creativity, birth and the physical activity of the body and brain. This card will show up if there are 3 aspects to the question or if it involves fertility and growth.

* Number 4 is the foundations in life: health, job, family and finances -- the elements of security and stability. This number will show up if the question surrounds basic issues and can indicate foundations that are either firm or infirm.

* Number 5 is change, the senses, independence, freedom and (the need for) open communication. This number will show up if unusual activities or events are apparent or upcoming or if there is a need to break free from a restraint of some kind.

* Number 6 is domestic and familial love, returning to the fold, care, nurturing and safety. This number will show up if the question concerns love in any of its forms -- we can love our jobs, our mates, our houses and many other things!

* Number 7 is logical thought and investigation...of both the scientific and the metaphysical. This number will show up when there is a need for careful evaluation or when there is an unknown or mysterious element to the question - it can also represent heeding the voice of intuition.

* Number 8 is power, control, authority and holds the potential to entrap and overwhelm. This number will show up when potent energies are at play -- this can be feeling confined or controlled by a person, place or thing or reaching a level of tranquil balance between the spiritual and material worlds -- there are two dramatically different energies in the 8: the power of ego versus the power of serenity.

* Number 9 is beginnings and endings (that are usually connected), imagination, creativity, intuition and compassion. This number will show up when subjects of a sensitive, mystical or metaphysical nature are addressed as well as ones concerning situations that are rapidly losing power over the consultant's life and must be ended.

* Number 10 is the actual end, the finalization, the finish line crossed -- it opens the door to the Ace. This number will show up when the consultant is standing at the threshold of the door and is ready to enter a new experience. This card equates to the Fool (the first card) in the Tarot.

The Face Cards

* Jacks refer to an important message that pertains to its suit. This card will show up when the consultant is waiting for a communication of some kind, like an agreement or an offer, but can also take the form of a direct and personal one to the querent.

* Queens refer to a woman who may assist or hinder, connects to the suit and can represent the consultant's state of mind or position in life.

* Kings refer to a man who may assist or hinder, connects to the suit and can represent the consultant's state of mind or position in life.

The Jokers (these may be removed prior to the reading if one so desires)

* The Red Joker refers to the the unexpected with positive overtones.

* The Black Joker refers to the unexpected with negative overtones.

As an example, if one is thinking about a new relationship and draws the 7 of Hearts, the message is one of cautious optimism...or if one is thinking about changing jobs and draws the 2 of swords, the message is one of caution, period, as there is a negative overtone in the form of imbalance between the consultant and an element of the potential job.

As a final example, if one is asking whether a move is in their future and draws the Ace of Diamonds...start packing!

Keep it simple and have fun! And by the way? If you choose to divine in the future using this simple system, keep the deck strictly for this purpose -- do not use it to play poker!

Author Heather Lagan is a spiritual advisor in Surrey, B.C., where she has provided counselling services for over 25 years. Heather's primary tools of reference are the Tarot and Chaldean Numerology, the latter being the subject of her book 'Babylon's Secret...The Truth About Your Name'. Check out her website at <http://thereadingroom101.com/> for more information on various subjects pertaining to the metaphysical world. Heather also offers readings locally and by special order...details online.



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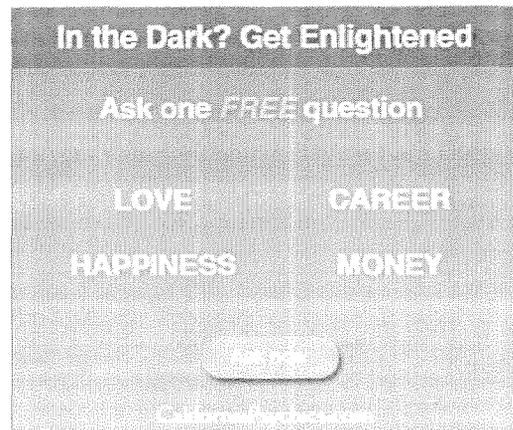
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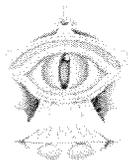
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Your online guide to divination and positive magic

[History] [Validity] [Divination] [Interpretation] [Tarot Deck]
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A spread is a preset pattern for laying out the cards that has its own particular interpretation and meaning. It defines how many cards are to be drawn, and what each one will mean. A spread is a template guiding the placement of the cards so they can help us get more insight into a given topic. Some spreads use only a few cards while others, many. Each spread is designed for a particular type of reading. Some are well-suited to general readings where no particular question is being asked, others work best when a specific question is being explored, and others are geared towards gauging the time scales involved in a reading.

The Triskele Spread

Just as the figure from which this spread gets its name consists of three branches radiating from a common center, so the Triskele Spread shows present concerns at the focal point of past, future and ultimate influences. This compact yet powerful spread can be used to address a specific issue, or it can be used for a more general reading. To prepare the reading, five cards are selected and dealt in the order shown. They are then interpreted in turn as follows:

- 1 The Covering** The important events, issues, attitudes or influences around the question or current situation
- 2 The Crossing** Current obstacles, problems, conflicts and opposition that the questioner must deal with
- 3 The Root** Past events or influences that have played a role in bringing about the current situation
- 4 The Future** Future events and fresh influences about to come into play that will operate in the near future
- 5 The Outcome** The eventual outcome of events shown by the other cards

The Horseshoe Spread

The Horseshoe is a simple spread of seven cards arranged, unsurprisingly, something like a horseshoe. This spread is often considered to be more applicable to a specific question than a general reading, though it may be used for either. To prepare the reading, seven cards are selected and dealt in the order shown. They are then interpreted in turn as follows:

- 1 The Past** Important events, issues or attitudes that have given rise to the current situation
- 2 The Present** The prevailing circumstances around the questioner
- 3 Hopes and Fears** The questioner's hopes, fears and expectations about the question or situation
- 4 Obstacles** Current obstacles, problems and conflicts that the questioner must deal with
- 5 Environment** The attitudes and actions of other people around the questioner



- 6 The Future** Future events and fresh influences about to come into play
7 The Outcome The eventual outcome of events shown by the other cards

The Celtic Cross

The Celtic Cross (sometimes called the Grand Cross) is probably the most common spread used to read the Tarot, though it is not the easiest to master. It is often stated that this spread is only suitable for answering a specific question, but in actual fact it works very well for general readings, too. The Celtic Cross is usually (though not always) used with a significator, selected during the preparatory phase of the reading. The significator is placed face-up on the table and the selected cards laid out as above, with the first card being placed face-down over the significator, the second across it and the rest around it. Some readers opt to say the following phrases as each card is laid down in turn:

If using a significator, place the card in the center of the table, and lay the number one card for the reading immediately over it. Then proceed with the rest of the cards.

Card 1: The question

The first card to be laid down represents the question in the mind of the querent. This can be a question they are asking consciously, or it can be something that is in the back of their mind.

Card 2: What covers the question

The second card is laid across the first card horizontally, and can be interpreted to mean an obstacle to the querent's question, or it can be another factor in the question itself.

Card 3: Thought and expectations.

The third card is laid down on the table below the first two, and it represents an issue or element in the querent's past which has influenced him or her to become the person he or she is today. This can be a recent event or a long-ago time, and it affects how this person views the situation they are in which has prompted them to seek tarot counseling.

Card 4: The foundation.

The fourth card in the spread is laid directly to the left of the first and second cards, and represents the phase which the querent has recently been in and is just now leaving the influence of. This is the sub-conscious. It can be either an emotional or mental phase, or it can show actual events or people in the querent's life which have been influential recently.

Card 5: The near past.

The fifth card in the spread is laid down above all the rest of the cards, and represents one possible outcome of the situation the querent is going through presently or something from the near past that is influencing the current situation.

Card 6: The near future.

The sixth card is laid out directly to the right of the first and second cards, and represents the phase the querent is going to be passing into, what will happen in the near future. Like the fourth card, the sixth can mean either an emotional or mental phase, or an actual person or event in the querent's life.

Card 7: The inner world.

The seventh card gets laid out to the right of the sixth card, and lower down, to begin forming a column on the side. This card represents the unconscious or subconscious feelings of the querent regarding the situation in question. It can be a person or an event, insofar as the querent is focused on them mentally, however, it is usual that the meaning is more about the emotion than an actual person or event.

Card 8: The outer world.

The eighth card is laid out above the seventh and represents an outside perspective on the situation in question. Usually this is interpreted as the way the querent's family and friends view the situation he or she is in. Things which are read in this position are to be noted strongly for the perspective which they can give the querent, however in no way do they reflect the actual outcome or events in the situation.

Card 9: Hopes and fears.

The ninth card is laid out above the eight and represents the querent's goals, hopes, fears and expectations regarding the situation in question. This can mean avoidance goals (things the querent wishes to avoid) as well as goals the querent would like to fulfill. This can be either emotional or mental, or an event. It is unlikely that an actual person will be represented here.

Card 10: The outcome.

The tenth card is laid out at the top of the column and represents the Final Outcome as it pertains to the querent's situation at hand. All of the cards leading up to this card should be considered as lending their own meaning to its context; in other words, this card represents the sum total of the reading and all the other information gathered. As with any outcome, if the querent changes the path he or she is on, this outcome's probability also changes. It can be used as a warning or an alert to watch for certain kinds of activity in the querent's life, or as a form of advice as to how to handle a certain situation in question. A few readers consider that if they feel the tenth and final card does not indicate the ultimate culmination of the reading, another reading should be performed using this card as significator, for clarification.

15 card layout

Also known as The English Spread

Cards 2-1-3: Here and now.

1 is the querent's general state.

2 is the internal aspects of the querent's environment (i.e. mental/intellectual influences).

3 is the external environment (i.e. physical/material influences).

Cards 4-8-12: Events and influences in the 'near future'

8 is the querent's general state.

4 is the internal influences or ordeals.

12 is the external influences or ordeals.

Cards 13-9-5: Events and influences further into the future, but not so far as to be blind. Maybe a week or a month at the most.

9 is the querent's general state.

13 is the internal influences or ordeals.

5 is the external influences or ordeals.

Cards 14-10-6: Influences or events. These cards represents the mode of the influences or events in either or both the near future and the further future.

10 is the querent's general state.

14 is the internal influences or ordeals.

6 is the external influences or ordeals.

Cards 7-11-15: Likely outcome. This is the likely outcome of these events, if things go as they currently are and the appropriate methods or influences are perceived and employed.

11 the querent's general state or state change.
7 the querent's internal state or growth.
15 the querent's external result or manifestation

6 card layout

Card 1: The past. Represents a portion of the past that is the basis of the question.

Card 2: Emphasis. This card also represents the past and is an emphasis card telling more about what led up to present situation.

Card 3 and 4: Energy surrounding the question. Factors in play at the time of the question which are important to be considered.

What the inquiring person feels about the present situation..

If it's about a relationship:

The cards represents male and female attitudes about the question.

It is NOT specified which card is male and which is female. You'll just have to know!

Card 5: What to work for. What needs to happen or be worked for, to attain the outcome.

Card 6: The outcome.
The outcome or immediate future.

5 card layout

It's a five-card spread for use with specific questions. The reader asks the querent to shuffle the cards. The reader takes the cards and asks the querent to chose five numbers; the first one has to be between one and 78, the second between one and 77 and so on. The reader picks the card from the deck (starting from the top) that corresponds with each number. Lay them out in a horizontal line from left to right.

The first card on the left is the situation as it stands now; what will happen if the querent takes no action and continues on the present course.

The second card represents what the querent could do to change that situation, whether for better or worse.

The third card represents why the querent is in this situation.

The fourth card represents forces (internal or external or both) that can help or hinder the querent.

The fifth card is what the outcome will be if the querent follows the changes represented by the second card.

THE ENGLISH SPREAD

The primary purpose of this spread is to provide information on choices in a querent's life. It is made up of five groups of three cards. The numbers on the cards show their order of placement. In the four quadrants, the spread is read from the outside cards to the inside cards.

When the cards are read, they are done so in a story book fashion. For example, if the following cards were present:

12: King of Swords

8: Two of Cups

4: Eight of Wands

These cards could be read: A man, one of thinking and intellect, will make a proposal to you in the very near future.

Card One: This represents the Querent, the problems surrounding them, their present situation and primary influences. This position is a card of summation, telling the nature of the entire spread.

Cards Two and Three: These in conjunction with card One, are the key cards of the spread. They give extended information on the situation of the Querent, and provide clues on the outcome of the paths indicated.

Cards Twelve, Eight, and Four (Upper Left): These show one direction in the Querent's life. If desired, the position can be the possibilities for alternate action, which may be desirable or undesirable, depending on the other cards in the spread.

Cards Thirteen, Nine, and Five: These show another direction in the Querent's life. If desired, the position shows the direction the Querent's life will naturally follow, unless some action is taken to change this course ("The Stars impel, they do not compel").

Cards Fifteen, Eleven, and Seven: These show what cannot not be changed. In all lives, there are events that are out of our control. To be aware of these events keeps one from wasting energy and time.

Cards Fourteen, Ten, and Six: These cards show where the Querent has leverage in life. This can indicate a strength, or provide a warning

THE WHEEL SPREAD

The Wheel Spread is used when there is no specific question. The strength of this spread is that it provides information about all areas of a person's life.

The twelve cards represent the twelve zodiac houses. When a card is interpreted, it is done so in the meaning of the house the card is placed in.

PYRAMID SPREAD

By James Schlesselman

This spread is based on the Tree Of Life glyph as found in the Kabbalah. The cards are laid out in a sequence which follows the "path of the flaming sword", which is the traditional order in which each circle or, "sephira", is manifested on the Tree. The two lower sephira, numbers 9 and 10, are "raised up" to fit between the 7th and 8th sephira to form the pyramid configuration. The first card is referred to as the "key card", while the sixth is called the "core card".

The interpretation may then proceed from this literal "Tree of Life" format in which each card is referred to its corresponding sephira on the Tree, and is considered in light of the qualities thereof, or, once the spread has been generated, one may choose to "detach" from the "Tree of Life" format and introduce one or more of any number of possible configurations that form new patterns, or grids, based on various structural relationships.

Here is an explanation of the nine sample patterns by James Schlesselman

Wedge

The key card oversees. The three solid black cards represent influences descending from above that wedges in between the two three card pyramids that represent two different ways of receiving and dealing with the solid black cards.

Grand triangle

Three three-card pyramids placed around the core card.

Grid and wheel

The solid black cards represent solid, fixed, male, or yang energies.

The white cards represent yielding, moving, female, or yin energies.

Double whammy

The key card oversees two six-card pyramids representing two possible outcomes, or yin and yang, etc. The three-card pyramid at the bottom center is an area where the two six-card pyramids overlap and are integrated.

Reducing

The key card, "x", absorbs or pulls up the two outer rows, "y and z", forming a single three-card pyramid comprised of "x,y,and, z". (all of the "component" cards are considered in this "reduced" pyramid.)

~~This simplifies (reduces) the reading into two three-card pyramids consisting of "x, y, and, z" and the three "a" cards respectively.~~

3 pillars

This reflects a direct correspondence to the three pillars of Severity, Mildness, and Mercy found on the Tree of Life. (see either of the above mentioned books)

3 dimensional



As the name implies this pattern "pops out" at you, so the core (black) card is the uppermost point of a cone, while the six cards (grey) surrounding it are the central portion of the cone, and the three corner cards form the base. Or, the direction can be viewed in reverse, so the core card is furthest away, as if your looking into a tunnel.

Triple mesh

three three-card pyramids whose bases are represented by "A, B, and,C". the points of these pyramids can be outward pointing, represented by "X", or they can point inward and share a common point represented by "O".

Yod, He, Vau, He

Derived from the Tetragrammaton, this represents the sacred progression of manifestation. From the top of the layout it's: the point, the line, the triangle, and the square.

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